

The Reading Journal

Bring reading to your life

STEPS TO SUCCESS

Relax

Read

Reflect

Write

Repeat

In addition to class reading assessments, you will evolve your writing ability by keeping a Reading Journal.

Here are a few ways to complete it:

1. What emotions did the book invoke: laughter, tears, smiles, anger? Record some of your reactions to the section of reading.
2. Sometimes books touch you, reminding you of your own life, as part of the larger human experience. Are there connections between the book and your own life? Or, does the book remind you of an event (or events) that happened to someone you know? Does the book remind you of what happened in another book you've read?
3. Would you like to be one of the characters (acquire a personality trait)? Which of the characters would you become, if you could? Why? If there's something about the character that you'd want to change, what is it?
4. Does the book leave you with questions you would like to ask? What are they? Would you like to direct your questions at a particular character? What questions would you like to ask the author of the book?
5. Are you confused about what happened (or didn't happen) in the book? What events or characters do you not understand? Does the use of language in the book confuse you? Is there anything that the author could have done to make what happened (or didn't happen) more clear?
6. Is there an idea in the book that makes you stop and think, or prompts questions? Identify the idea and explain your responses.
7. What are your favorite lines/quotes? Copy them into your reading log/journal and explain why these passages caught your attention.
8. Does this section of the reading change the way for think about the world or the people in it? What did you learn that you never knew before?
9. Who else should read this? Should anyone not be encouraged to read this book? Why? Would you recommend the book to a friend or fellow classmate?
10. Write a brief summary or review of the section. What happened? Capture what it is about the book that stands out (or doesn't stand out).
11. Write about the characters? Which one is your favorite? Is there a character you hate/detest/despise? Why? What traits could you change about the characters that would change how you think about them? Do you think that any of the characters represent *real* people? Does anything about a particular character seem to be related to the author's true personality--who the writer is?
12. Sometimes the author includes figurative language to make the reading more interesting. Can you find any great examples? How does the use of figurative language enhance the story?
13. What lesson(s) do you think the author is trying to teach? What themes do you find? What is the author's purpose? Does the author wish to preserve or reform our culture?
14. **Answer a teacher-given question.**
15. **Record 3 Vocabulary words and page numbers for each reading section and look them up in a dictionary. PARAPHRASE (simplify) the definitions into your own words. - !!!! ALWAYS COMPLETE THIS STEP !!!!**

How they are graded?

Since the point is to become more involved with the book and evolve our writing ability, it is important to think about how you write as you write.

CONTENT is the most important factor.

10 pts + ** BONUS ** No errors / Flawless	8 pts 1-2 errors	6 pts 3-4 errors	4 pts 5-6 errors	2-0 pts 7 or more errors
Writer <u>demonstrates an understanding</u> of the book and <u>makes valuable reflections</u>	Writer <u>demonstrates an understanding</u> of the book and <u>makes valuable reflections</u>	Writer <u>demonstrates an understanding</u> of the book and <u>makes valuable reflections</u>	Writer <u>demonstrates an understanding</u> , but <u>does not make valuable reflections</u>	Writer <u>demonstrates a lack of effort</u> or <u>understanding, does not make valuable reflections, or both.</u>
Contains 3x Vocabulary Words + Paraphrased Definitions	Contains 3x Vocabulary Words + Paraphrased Definitions	Contains 2x Vocabulary Words + Paraphrased Definitions	Contains 1x Vocabulary Words + Paraphrased Definitions	Contains x0 Vocabulary Words + Paraphrased Definitions.
In proper paragraph form	In proper paragraph form	In proper paragraph form	In proper paragraph form, but not enough support.	No paragraph format or incorrect paragraph format
Writing is legible and does not look hurried	Writing is legible and does not look hurried	Some of the writing is illegible	Some of the writing is illegible making it difficult to understand	Most or all writing is illegible making it difficult to understand
Is completely original and unique to the writer	Is completely original and unique to the writer			
Written using a variety of sentence types				

What are errors?

- 1 - Punctuation errors 3 - Grammar errors (unintentional fragments, syntax errors) 5. Capitalization errors
- 2 - Spelling errors 4 - Using text language in place of words (u, lol, r, btw) 6. Using symbols in place of words (+, &, #)

How much to write?

1 page per assigned reading section in the approved composition notebook, which includes three lines for vocabulary study
- NO LOOSE SHEETS OF PAPER - ALL ENTRIES MUST BE IN THE COMPOSITION BOOK

What is a paragraph?

#1 Main Idea / Thesis Statement

#2 Supporting Details

#3 Concluding Statement

Main Idea / Thesis Statement

The main idea, or thesis statement should give your readers a clear and specific idea of your topic.

The main idea can be thought of as a one sentence summary of the whole writing assignment.

Example - Chapter 2 of the book brought back pleasant memories because it reminded me of the time when I visited my grandmother's house and we would look at old photographs of my grandfather in his military uniform.

Support / Evidence

The point of the giving support is to prove the Main Idea/Thesis Statement is accurate. You need to supply the reader with information that helps your reader understand why you believe what you believe.

At the same time you need to prove that you have read the material.

In order to do these things, you need to write using specific details from the text.

Do not be vague or unclear. You are proving you have reads the story through these journal entries.

Conclusion

Think of this as a reflection of the Main Idea / Thesis Statement.

Restate the main idea in a new way and include your attitude (opinion) and final thoughts on the subject.

Example

Main Idea/Thesis Statement

Chapter 2 of the book brought back pleasant memories because it reminded me of the time when I visited my grandmother's house and we would look at old photographs of my grandfather in his military uniform.

Conclusion that reflects the main idea and offers an opinion (attitude) on the subject

Reading this book has brought back some wonderful memories of my childhood and helps keep my grandfather's memory alive.

Example Entry #1

Maus by Art Spiegelman

Pages 1-40

November 13, 2010

Prompt #1

The first two chapters of Maus by Art Spiegelman produced different emotions. I felt annoyed by Artie's father, Vladek, when I first met him. He is a frank old man who has no trouble saying exactly what he thinks. Immediately, he yells at his new wife, Mala, for offering Artie a wire hanger when there are better, wooden ones available. He also seems selfish, because he begins to date Anja Zylberberg behind Lucia's back without a second thought to how Lucia would feel. He even blames Artie twice for making him spill his pills. Another feeling I experienced while reading is pity. Poor Miss Stefanska is imprisoned for hiding a package for Anja. Anja is part of some underground group that spies on the Russian communists. She receives some sort of package that she is meant to translate into German and hides it with her neighbor. The police find it and arrest Miss Stefanska, and Anja does not try to help her; she lets her sit in jail for three months. I also felt sorrow and grief when Vladek and Anja passed through Czechoslovakia by train. They saw a giant flag with a swastika on it floating over a small town. During this trip, some other passengers told them stories of Jews being abused by the Nazis. I cannot believe some of these atrocities occurred and wonder how so many people witnessed these things and did nothing for so long. Although the first two chapters left me with negative emotions, I understand the need to read this material. It helps me understand history and allows me to see how I am fortunate to be alive in a time when there is peace in my own country.

Sanitarium p.36 - Noun - A hospital

Communist p.27 - Noun - A supporter of Communism (a classless society where the state controls the economy)

Glaucoma p.39 - Noun - A disease of the eyes

Example Entry #2

The Lifecycle of Software Objects by Ted Chiang

Whole Book

November 14, 2010

Prompt #8

The Lifecycle of Software Objects is a brutal realization of how human beings are becoming more dependent on virtual technology. Just as our culture grows into a more antisocial culture, Ana and Derek begin to solely exist as parental figures to lifelike avatars in a virtual world called Data Earth. These avatars, who are like Sims, are designed to grow from birth into adolescence and, finally, into adulthood. The Sims learn as much during that time as its human owner wishes to teach them. Imagine a Sim that can learn what you teach it, and instead of it doing what you want it to do, it does what it wants to do. There are numerous online games that remind me of this story: Second Life, World of Warcraft, Sims, Runescape. I even found a German Virtual World called Moove, where you meet people to date and have a relationship with, all under the guise of an avatar. It also reminded me of how people are obsessed with their cell phones and Facebook. Many people have replaced actual face-to-face conversations with texts and tweets. Ana and Derek also communicate through Data Earth and inside online forums. Data Earth is a virtual world where you create an avatar version of yourself and talk to other human players as well as the invented Sims. The story pushes us to question how much of our own lives become artificial when we begin to develop relationships with artificial technology (A.I.). Ana and Derek's real life relationships fall apart due to their obsessions with their avatars; Derek has to get divorced when his wife can no longer stand Derek's fixation. He spends more time teaching his avatars, Marco and Polo, than nurturing his relationship with his wife. Can a Sim replace a human being? Can they fulfill our human needs? After completing this haunting portrayal of human folly, I am saddened by the fact that we are not as far away from this being a reality as I would like to hope. More and more, we rely on computers to control our social lives. How much longer before our Sims become us, entirely?

Digient - p.1 - Noun - A virtual being able to grow and learn

Pandemic - p.86 - Noun - A very widespread disease

Exasperated - p.126 - Verb - make angry or frustrated

Writing Resource

Punctuation

Parts of Speech

Sentence Structure

PUNCTUATION CHEAT SHEET

Period .

Used to end a sentence

Used to Abbreviate words - U.S.A.

Question Mark ?

To end an interrogative sentence (a question)

Exclamation Point !

Ends a sentence that expresses a forceful emotion

Used after short exclamations - Ouch! Not again!

Apostrophe '

To replace missing letters to make contractions - I'll / I'd

To make words possessive (to show ownership) - Daisy's hamster / The kids' sled

Quotation Marks " "

Used to open and close a quotation

"You are a genius!" she said.

"Yes, I am", he replied.

She said, "You are welcome."

**** Comma comes after the quotation mark**

**** Do not place a comma after an exclamation mark or question mark if the sentence continues**

**** End punctuation goes inside the quotation marks**

Comma ,

To make a list

To join clauses

To set off an interrupter (a nonessential part of the sentence)

To set off "which" and "who" clauses

After introductory words or names

Introduce a quotation

Parentheses ()

Set off an explanation interrupter

Hyphen -

Used to connect words

Ellipsis ...

Shows missing words or words left out

Colon

Used to introduce things

Used before long quotations

****There must be a complete (stand alone) sentence before the colon**

Semi-Colon

Used to join two independent clauses together in a compound sentence. Takes the place of the word "and".

PARTS OF SPEECH CHEAT SHEET

Noun - Words used to name things, people, places, objects, and ideas = dog, Nathan, game, soccer, tower, imagination, hamburger, cheetah, baseball

Pronoun - Words used in place of a noun = he, she, it, they, her, his, him, my, I, mine, myself, herself, himself, which, who, whatever, this, that, these

Verb - A word that tells you what something is doing or being = run, jump, think, study, itch, cook, float, cry, be, am, was, were, do, has, is, become, seem

Adjective - Words that describe (modify) nouns = white, black, smooth, rough, slender, fat, handsome, ugly, powerful, weak, young, old, brief, long

Adverb - Words that describe (modify) verbs, adjective, or other adverbs = slowly, bravely, cheaply, barely, really, well, often, fast, never, almost, too

Preposition - Words that show location, time, direction, or space in relation to other words in the sentence = over, under, as, at, by, with, against, in, until

Conjunction - Words that join other words, phrases, or clauses together = for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so, after, before, while, since, although, unless, because

Interjection - Words that express strong feelings - Wow! Gosh! Yuck!

SENTENCE CHEAT SHEET

Clause = A group of words that have a subject and a predicate

Phrase = A group of words missing either the subject, predicate, or both

Independent Clause = A complete sentence that can stand alone on its own

Dependent Clause = A sentence with a subject and a predicate that does not make sense unless it is attached to an Independent Clause (In a Complex Sentence)

Simple Sentence = one complete sentence only. A sentence with one subject and one predicate

Compound Sentence = two sentences put together, combined with a FANBOYS conjunction or a semi-colon (For, And, Nor, But, Or, Yet, So, ;)

Complex Sentence = one sentence and a dependent clause stuck together with a subordinating conjunction